A Brief History of

The Presbyterian Church
Hemmingford,
Que.

For 100 Years.

By

Rev. F. W. Murray

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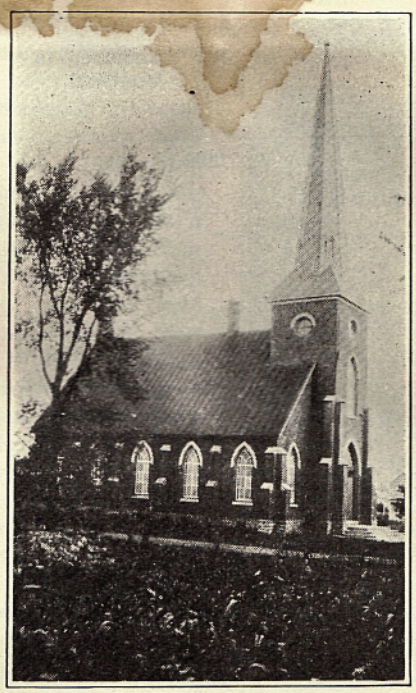


ST. ANDREW'S CHURCH
HEMMINGFORD

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH CENTENARY

The following is a complete list of the elders of this congregation:

Name	When installed	Ceased to act	Died
Alex. Walker	date unknown		Mar. 5, 1863
John Reay	" "		April 20, 1856
Joseph Merlin	" "		Feb. 26, 1859
Joshua Odell	" "		Oct. 23, 1869
F. S. Verity, M. D.	1856		Oct. 15, 1862
George Hamilton	"	Died in Mass.	Jan. 31, 1881
Robt. Miller	"	Removed to Montreal	
John Kyle	"		Aug. 15, 1865
Joseph Milne	June 22, 1860		Oct. 25, 1870
Donald McFee (Major)	" "		Dec. 14, 1880
Hugh Merlin	" " "		April 21 1902
Thomas Kyle, Jr.	" "	1878	Mar. 18, 1889
Wm. Barr, Sr.	Mar. 9, 1879		Sept. 2, 1887
John McNaughton	" "	Died in Denver	Jan. 6, 1895
Henry O'Neil	" "	Jan. 1881 Moved to Montreal	
Archibald Cleland	Jan. 9, 1887		
G. J. McKay	" "		
Donald McFee (Capt.)	May 5, 1889		
Thomas Merlin	" "		
Geo. S. McCrea	Feb. 1, 1903	Jan. 1910 Moved West	
Alfred Kenny	" "		
Robert Elliott, M. D.	Jan. 18. 1911	1912 Moved away	
P. H. M. Somerville	June 28, 1912		
W. C. Robson	Feb. 25, 1916		Jan. 8, 1921
W. J. Robson	When the separate sessions of St. Andrew's and Knox Churches united as one session		July 17. 1919
W. Walter Barr			
John G. Barr			Jan. 5, 1921
W. H. Stewart			

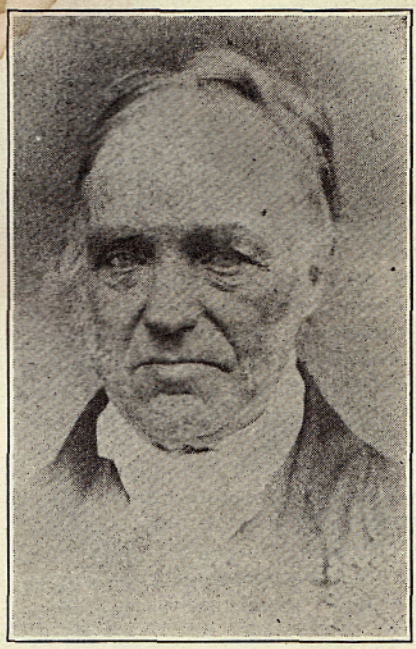
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH CENTENARY

History Of Hemmingford Presbyterian Church

The first minister of the congregation was the Rev. John Merlin, of Maghera, County Derry, Ireland, who received his ministerial education in Glasgow and Edinburgh. In his diary is this note in his handwriting, dated Sept. 1st, 1856. "This day I have completed my 74th year and the 33rd of my ministry in Hemmingford." This note indicates that he reckoned his ministry here to date from Sept. 1st, 1823. Mrs. Merlin and their three children followed Mr. Merlin upon receipt of a letter from him, which had been long delayed in the mails. They made their home for the first two years in a cabin, on what is now Wm. McKay's land, on the South side of the brook crossing the road near Duquette's and on the West side of the road. In the third year they moved to what is now the Joseph Merlin farm and lived on the knoll near the road, south of the house now occupied by Joseph Merlin. grandson. This house was begun in 1837, and completed in 1838. In this home the Rev. Mr. Merlin died in 1866, aged 85, his wife having predeceased him by two years.

In addition to his duties as a minister, Mr. Merlin taught school for some years, at first in a school-room at Scriver's Corners (now Hemmingford Village) on the site now occupied by O. Lacasse's store, etc. In 1828 his neighbors raised a school near his dwelling, in front of what is now Hiram Humphrey's home. Here he taught assisted by his wife, who taught in his absence. In later years a part of his duty was also to examine candidates and certify them for license as teachers.

His regular preaching places were the school at Scriver's Corners, at Sherrington a school 9 miles North from Scriver's, and in Black's school 20 miles West of Scriver's. Monthly service was given at Beechridge, to which place he floated down Norton Creek in a canoe, water permitting.



REV. JOHN MERLIN
1823-53

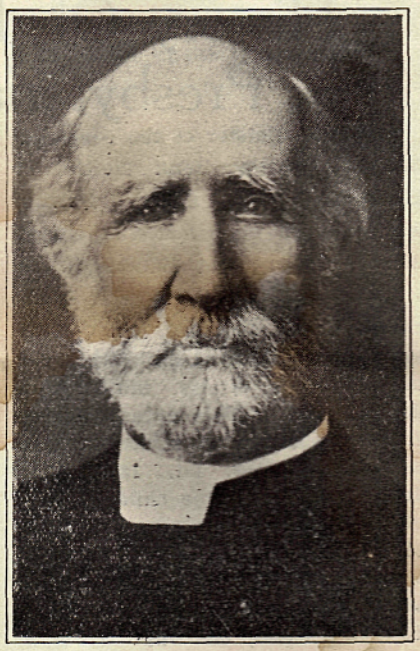
Communion seasons were regularly held in the schoolhouse at Scriver's until 1842 when a stone church was built a little north of the present village and on the East side of the street. The Church was 37x52 with gable facing West, entered by a double door in centre of front. Within the entrance was a lob by with minister's room to the right. and gallery stairs to left. The auditorium had a row of seats on each

side and a double row in the middle. A door to each of the two aisles opened from the lobby. The pulpit was high with a stairway on each side. A space in front of the pulpit served for the communion tables, the communicants being seated at the tables during the serving of the elements.

In the early years of his ministry Mr. Merlin was connected with "the Presbyterian Synod of Ireland distinguished by the name of seceders and with the United Associate Synod of Scotland" which did nothing for him in the way of grants. On the solicitation of his brethren in 1841 Mr. Merlin connected with the Church of Scotland and became entitled to a grant from the clergy reserves. On retiring from the ministry he received the regular allowance of £100 per year during life.

On July 4th, 1853, the congregation of Sherrington and Hemmingford made formal application, were received into the presbytery of Montreal and Mr. Alex. C. Stewart, a licentiate of the Reformed Presbyterian Church was appointed as supply. Mr. Stewart was ordained and inducted into the charge Nov. 8th, 1853, and resigned Jan. 17th, 1855.

On Sept. 8th, 1858 the Rev. James Patterson, now D. D., was inducted and ministered here till Sept. 1st, 1882. Dr. Patterson lived for a time with Major Donald McFee and with Alex. McClymont till the Manse (now the property of Mr. Thomas Merlin) was completed, into which he moved in 1860. His services were at first given to Hemmingford, and for a time to Sherrington. But during his pastorate Knox Church became a part of the congregation and his first meeting of session there was held on Sept. 15th, 1876. The first communion roll recorded by Dr. Patterson in 1858 contains 74 names. The first Sabbath School in the congregation was opened by him on the first Sabbath of December,



REV. JAS. PATTERSON, D. D.
1858-82

1858 and two dollars were voted from the session fund for Sabbath School purposes.

The present St. Andrew's Church was dedicated on Wednesday, Dec. 11th, 1872. It is seated for 350 persons and cost when completed, $6000.00 The morning service on that day was conducted by Rev. Dr. Patterson, assisted by the Rev. Dr. Buckley of Plattsburg, N. Y., who preached from II Chron. 6: 18. In the evening of the same day, Dr. Patterson was assisted by the Rev. Gavin Lang of St. Andrew's Church, Montreal, Moderator of Presbytery, who gave the dedicatory address, by the Rev. W. M. Black, of St. Mark's, Montreal, and by the Rev. President Beecham of Vermont University who preached from the text: "Provide things honest (honorable) in the sight of all men." The enterprise was especially indebted to the late Julius Scriver, M. P., to the much

loved minister, to Mrs. Scriver, Mrs. Patterson and the many who labored with them.

The Rev. Wm. Robertson, the next minister, served from Dec. 29th, 1884 till his death which took place Jan. 4th, 1894.

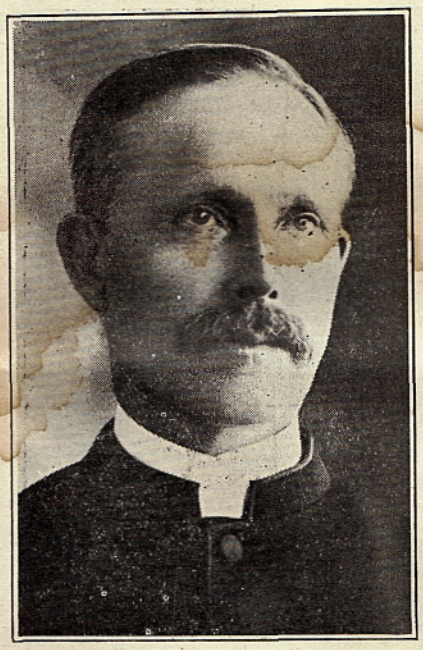
REV. WILLIAM ROBERTSON
1884-94

The Rev. Roderick McKay, M. A., B. D., served from April 11th, 1895 till Dec. 12th, 1899.

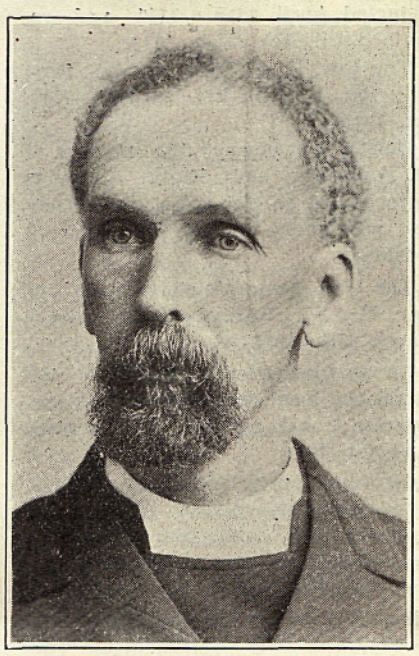
The Rev. A. Lee, B. A., served from June 29th, 1900 till Dec. 2nd, 1906. During Mr. Lee's ministry the present Manse was bought from John F. Scriver on April 2nd, 1901 for $1800.00, and the old Manse property was sold to Thomas Merlin for $1200.00. St. Andrew's W. M. S. was organized in Mr. Lee's time.

The Rev. C. Haughton, B. A. was minister from April 15th, 1907 till Nov. 13th, 1910.

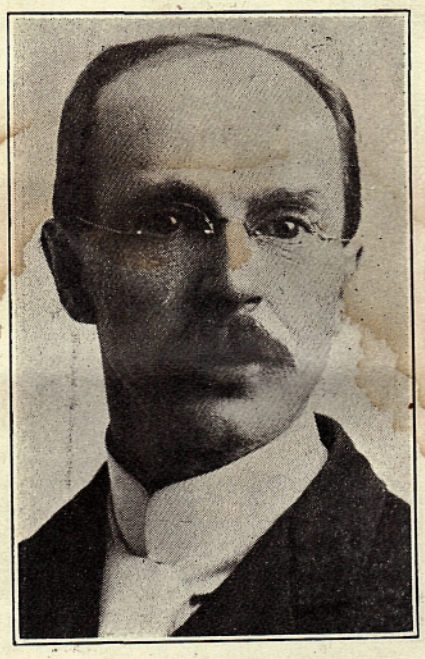
He was succeeded by the Rev. S. Gorley Brown, who was ordained and



REV. RODERICK McKAY, B. D.
1895-99



REV. A. LEE, B. A.
1900-06



REV. C. HAUGHTON, B. A.
1907-10

REV. S. G. BROWN
1911-12

inducted April 24th, 1911 and remained till Nov. 24th, 1912.

The Rev. D. M. Reid served from May 10h, 1913 till his death on Nov. 1st, 1915.

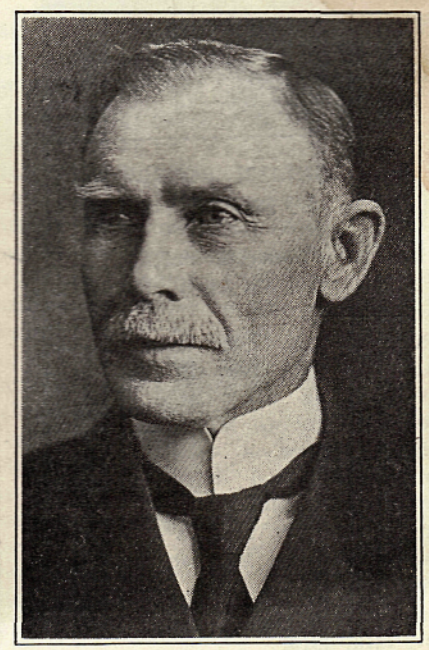
During the vacancy the sessions of St. Andrew's and Knox Churches were united on Feb. 25th, 1916. They had previously worked as separate sessions.

The next pastorate was that of Rev. F. W. Murray which began March 27th, 1916.

An amalgamation took place between the local Methodist and Presbyterian congregations, dating from June 1st, 1918.

On August 17th, 1922, at a meeting in St. Andrew's Church, Miss Bessie M. Cairns was designated as Mission teacher to Kong Moon, South China.

The congregation at this time contains 85 Presbyterian families and 34 families of Methodists The Presbyterian communion roll contains 186 names. The Methodist



REV. D. M. REID
1913-15

roll, by the amalgamation terms, is kept separately.

There has been but brief reference to the faithful work of the various ministers. But the present minister hears many kindly words of those who preceded him and of their faithful labors.

To mark the entrance of the congregation upon the 100th year of its history, special services were held in St. Andrew's Church, Oct. 1st, 1922, morning and evening, Knox Church worshipping with St. Andrews for the day. The special preacher for the day was Rev. R. W. Dickie, D. D. of Knox Crescent Church, Montreal, who conveyed the greetings of the Presbytery and whose sermons in the morning from Eph. 2: 19-22, and in the evening from 1 Thess. 5: 16, were most moving and powerful. At the morning service the minister was assisted by the Rev. Jas. Patterson, D. D. in the administration both of the Sacrament of Baptism, and of the Lord's Supper. The infant baptized was Thomas Robson Cleland, all of whose grandparents and whose parents were married by the Rev. Dr. Patterson, and whose father T. E. Cleland was baptized by him. The day was warm and beautiful and the church was full. In the evening Dr. Patterson again took a full part in the services, especially leading in a prayer that united the hearts of the people with him in deep emotion at the throne of grace.

On Thursday evening, Oct. 5th, the ladies of the congregation held a centennial tea-meeting in the Town Hall, which was crowded. After the repast a civic welcome was extended to the gathering by Mayors R. W. Blair of the Village, and R. T. Brownlee of the Township. Mr. Joseph Merlin gave most interesting reminiscenses of his grandfather, the first minister. Mr. Robert Ellerton, Town Clerk, gave an account of the educational and municipal development, and an account of the administration of justice in the community. Rev. T. S. St. Aubin conveyed the greetings of the sister congregation of Russeltown. The Rev. Geo. F. Dewey, asst. minister of St. Andrew's Church, Westmount, brought the greetings of its minister, the Rev. W. J. Clark. D. D., Moderator of the General Assembly. The Rev. S. Gorley Brown of St. Luke's, Montreal, and formerly minister here conveyed the greetings of his people. The Rev. F. W. Murray read a history of the congregation, also announcing the receipt of greetings from the session of the American Church, Montreal, through Mr. Chas. Scriver, and of letters bearing kindly words from Mrs. A. I. Reid, widow of a former minister, and the Rev's. C. Haughton and Roderick McKay, former ministers and from Rev. H. S. Lee, son of a former minister. The evening closed with the singing of the National Anthem.